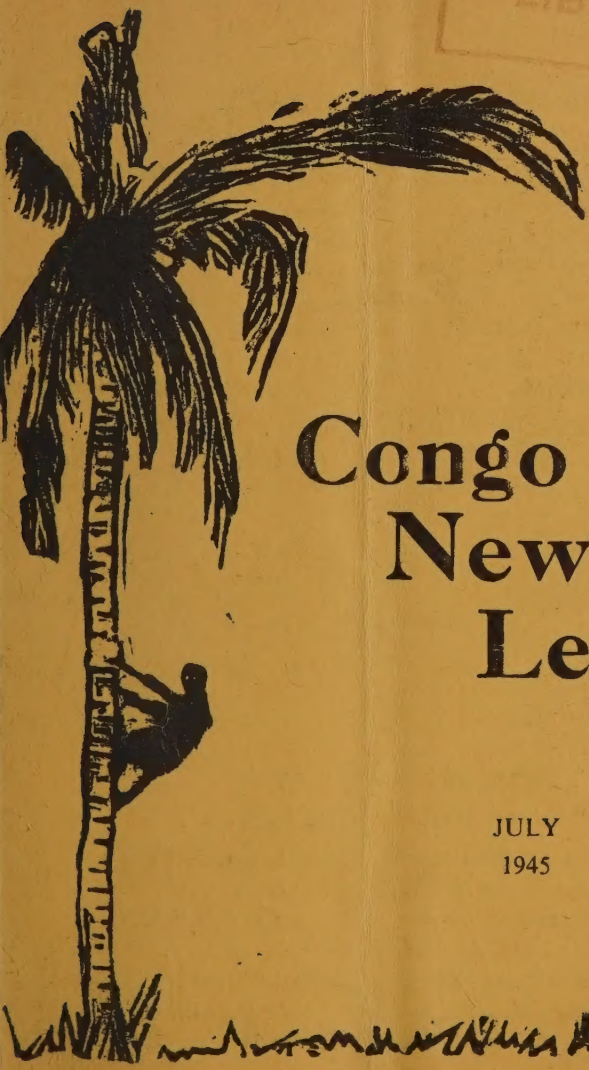
Archives

BERKELEY BAPTIST DIVINITY SCHOOL LIBRARY



Congo News Letter

JULY
1945

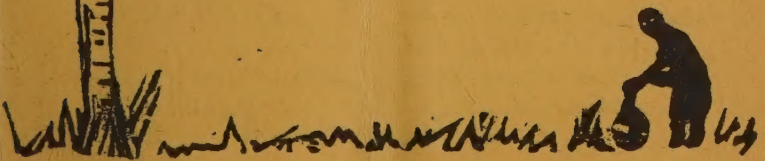


TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Prayer ..... By Stephen Yamfu
A Meeting of Women ..... Margaret Hall
Women Awakening ..... Margaret Hall
David Nsiata of Sona Bata ..... Roland Metzger
New Africa ..... Phyllis Benner
Out of the Jumps Diary ..... The Jumps
Conference ..... Margaret Hall
"Where He Leads Me" ..... B. W. Armstrong

STATION NEWS
Kimpese Notes ..... Margaret Hall

Published Quarterly by the
Missionaries of the A.B.F.M.S.

Published at Sims House Press, Léopoldville.
Subscription price 25 cents per year.
Subscriptions may be sent to Treasurer A.B.F.M.S.,
152 Madison Avenue, New York, 16 N.Y.
Subscription price in Congo 10 francs.
Address correspondence to Editor C.N.L.,
A.B.F.M.S., Léopoldville II
Congo Belge.

Congo News Letter.

Vol. XXXVI JULY 1945 No. 3.

PRAYER OFFERED BY STEPHEN YAMFU IN THE KIKONGO CHURCH JUNE 1945.

Our Father God, we are met here to-day in this, Thine own house, that we might show our fellowship in Christ and our sonship to Thee, because in our faith in Thy Son we are also become Thy children.

We have come as one goes to a feast, bearing an empty plate. Although we come with an empty plate, we expect to be filled. A hungry baby that has waited in the village for its mother to come up from the fields smiles and is happy to see its mother, but it starts crying if its hunger is not appeased. We have come into Thy house, happy with expectation and have sung songs of joy to be here. Now we wait for Thy Holy Spirit to come into our hungry hearts and we are crying unto Thee. "Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Lord, I cry unto Thee; make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice when I cry unto Thee."

All that we ask for ourselves we also ask for others. In the hospital there are many who need help. The medical workers will give them medicine and change their bandages but we ask Thee to lay Thy healing hand on them that they might be fully healed.

In the lands from which the white men come there has been much fighting, and it still goes on. We do not understand all of the trouble but we ask that the fighting may stop. Lead the white people to understand that it would be better to send more teachers out here to us than it is to go on killing each other.

Our presence here is a proof of our desire to worship Thee and a testimony to our faith. Grant us that which we have asked for, and bless us ere we depart from this house. We offer our thanks unto Thee and ask for the blessing in the name of our Savior.

Recorded by B.W. ARMSTRONG

A MEETING OF WOMEN

After the Conference on Work among Women and Girls held in August of last year at Kimpese some native Christians were heard to say: "You are always talking about us, why don't you talk more with us?" It is true that some questions were referred to a sub-committee made up of men representatives of the four missions which participated in the Conference, but it was, after all, a Conference on work among women and girls. So some A.B.F.M.S. missionaries decided that before the findings were brought to the mission as a whole a group of women should be given a chance to express themselves on certain questions.

And so it was that some twenty Christian women, representative of the whole A.B.F.M.S. field, met at Banza Manteke in April. They were welcomed to rooms in the Girls' Boarding School where they found beds spread with covers made by the girls. The wives of the teachers and nurses prepared their food. For one meal they were guests of the missionaries when all ate together on the water tower and enjoyed the beautiful landscape and sunset.

The first sessions were spent in listening to reports of the work on the various stations and the part of the women in it. Some reports were encouraging and some were discouraging. The conclusion reached was that the women of Congo are behind in the work of God just as they follow behind their husbands on the trail. The time has now come for them to walk together, on the trail and in the work of God, like Buabubi and Yilela, of whom we read in the last number of the Congo News Letter. That conclusion colored the findings of the discussions that followed.

It was felt that special effort must be put forth among the women, that weekly women's meetings should be held in the villages, occasional gatherings at church centers and yearly meetings on the station; that suitable women should be sought out and given the work of itinerating in the villages in order to stimulate interest, and that all Christian women should do more to win others of their villages to Christ; that women should take more part in church gatherings; that any woman who does a real job like teaching in a school or teaching a whole village or itinerating in the villages should be paid;

that more girls should be sent to EPAMAC for nurses training and others should train to be teachers; that girls' schools should be maintained but that any girl or woman capable of doing so should be allowed to enter classes with boys or with men.

It was decided that the leaders of the village women's meetings should be chosen by the church. And it was felt that wherever possible they should be the wives of pastors, catechists or infirmiers. But if such wives were not fitted and willing to lead, then any Christian woman who is capable should be chosen, because there should be a leader in every village. Some of the things which should be taught and put into effect through these meetings were discussed.

It was agreed that to those who say: "There is no point in girls going to school because they can never get work to earn money like men" a good answer is: "The first and greatest work of a woman in any country is in her home. She must keep her house and care for her children and husband and be willing to try new things that will make for greater fellowship in the home. Anything that a girl learns in school will be of great help to her in this work. Education is not just to make money but to help us to live fuller happier lives."

Time was given to discussion of the Report of the above mentioned sub-committee of the Kimpese Conference. The women were for the most part in accord with all that was said about the authority of the father and the maternal uncle, widows and orphans, dowry, marriage ceremonies and community of property. But it was interesting to note that they could not agree to a time when dowry should no longer be paid though they do think the amount should be kept low. And also they felt that in the areas which they represented the lead in the matter of eating together should be taken by the women.

During the four days, each woman took a part in some station meeting. A group went to the Leper Camp, others to the hospital, women took the station chapel services and a women preached the Sunday sermon, a wonderful message which held the attention of all.

Sunday evening, Banza Manteke repeated their Easter pageant for the benefit of the delegates. The climax of the pageant, ways of carrying out the Great Commission, was a challenge to the women and a fitting close to the happy

days of stimulating Christian fellowship.

MARGARET HALL

WOMEN AWAKENING

One might say that the year just past has been "Woman's Year" at Kimpese. Last August representatives of the four missions working in Lower Congo met here for a very worthwhile Conference on Work among Women and Girls. Miss Shank, Home Secretary of the Woman's American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, was present at the Conference and also later visited E.P.I. in session.

The faculty of E.P.I. responded to suggestions of the Conference and this year gave some teacher training, theory and practice, to the upper class women. Three women leaving that class, because their husbands finished the four year course in May, were at Commencement granted Certificates of Achievement. The innovation seems to have created much interest and many favorable comments. Catherine Akaki was the women's Commencement speaker. Her own words of exhortation are indicative of the thinking of more and more of our Congo women!

"We women, at the end of this year, thank all our teachers, white and black. We thank them because all of them have worked very hard to help us and to teach us many things. We also thank Mama Doctor (nurse) and all her assistants for the help we have received in time of sickness—us and our children and our husbands, too.

"To the women who are leaving school this year: We must work together with our husbands. And why? Because some of us came here to Kimpese not knowing how to read even a little bit, but now we have learned enough to be able to help our husbands in the work of God and to teach children. We must obey our husbands. And why? Because God first made man and then we women to be the helper of men. For this reason we must work well together with our husbands in everything in order to lift up this our country of Congo Belge. We think sometimes that work requiring learning and intelligence belongs only to the men, but that is not at all so.

"To you who are going to continue here at Kimpese: Study hard and learn well. We women are holding our country back. Our husbands are going ahead but we are

lagging behind. For this reason we must now wake up and cease our foolish sleeping. And why? Because this is no longer the time to be foolishly sleeping like we have been. We must work together with our husbands in order to make our country rise.

"The wife of a teacher must be clean in her person and in her house and in everything, in order that we may be true witnesses in order that others may follow us in making our country rise.

"We women in this country have been ashamed to teach our own people what we learn, like the way of God, and other things which can help our country. Now let us work well together with all Christians in the service of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Only three women to receive the certificates makes possible another forward move — eight of the most promising women of that same class will still be with us this coming year, since the husbands of six of them have not as yet finished their course and the husbands of two are being retained as junior assistants. The faculty looks forward to an interesting and profitable year of more advanced work with this group of outstanding and capable women.

Towards the close of the past school year women took part in village preaching. either in a group going out to a nearby village or in company with their husbands.

This dry season there is being held here a two month's Bible course for women — 24 from 8 stations of 3 missions are in attendance. One is a graduate of the Sona Bata medical school, some have been faithful workers for as long as 25 years, some are very young women, a group of 8 are from San Salvador (Protuguese Congo), but all are eager and are grateful for this opportunity of study and fellowship.

Pray for them as they go back to their various tasks, pray for all the women who will be studying this year at Kimpese, pray for us who try to teach them and share with them.

MARGARET HALL

DAVID NSIATA OF SONA BATA

David Nsiata is one of the fifteen ordained pastors of the Sona Bata field. He has been set apart as travelling evangelist

because of his remarkable gifts as a preacher, evangelist, organizer, judge, and "pepper-upper" of churches. He also has charge of the work at the church of Kimpongo, which is a model for how a small church can be wide awake and active. Last year one of Nsiata's eyes was pierced by a flyng nail while he was helping another man to build his house. This injury has given him great pain, but he has tried to carry on his work. In December he finally had to give up and come into the hospital again. Eventually the doctor had to remove the eye and now Nsiata is back on the job. The following are extracts from his report last fall on his activities.

ROLAND METZGER

ITINERARIES OF DAVID NSIATA

Oct. 8, 1944:- This Sunday at Kimpongo 7 people were returned to church fellowship. Fifty-six partook of Communion. The gifts totaled 198.50 francs. There were 2 babies dedicated.

Oct. 9:- I arrived at Kitempa for the purpose of making out record cards of church members for the new file at Sona-Bata. We had a very happy time in the prayer service in this village, but there is no teacher here and so the service was attended by the Christian people only.

Oct. 11:- We arrived at Mbamba and had a very happy time in the prayer service. Made out 12 record cards.

Oct. 12:- I arrived at Kitampa in which village Lina Keto lives. (One of our most active and gifted women leaders.) We had a very, very happy time in the prayer service. Made out 18 record cards for those in good church standing.

Oct. 28:- We went to Kimbambu. A large crowd came for the prayer service, but I am very sad because the teacher does not take care of his school. Even at worship time he does not bother to ring the bell to call people together. The village people reported this matter to us and we saw that it was not good for the work, so we removed the teacher from his work.

Oct. 29:- We arrived Saturday at the church of Kidia. In the evening we had a worship service followed by the church business meeting. In regards to the matter of the pastor, Simon Ndeba; I read the letter received by the Association (which has oversight and control of all general

policies and the welfare of the 46 churches of the Sona Bata field.), which letter said that Pastor Ndeba was not worthy to come to Kidia to give Communion. I asked the people what they had against him. Everyone was very much surprised about this matter. Then it was discovered that one man, Mpangala, said that he had written the letter. Then everyone was more surprised. "Are you, one man, the church?" Mpangala was very ashamed. We asked him to explain what he had against Ndeba, and we saw that there was no case. Then Mpangala asked forgiveness from Ndeba and then from the church, and this matter was finished.

Then we entered the matter of the two villages, Kidia and Nsata. Kidia is now the site of the church center and school, but Nsata has a much larger number of school children. When we began to question them, the people of Kidia, those in the church and those not, showed great anger and did not want to agree with the people of Nsata. The church and school both, they insisted, must be at Kidia. Then we asked the people of Nsata what they wanted. They said they were perfectly willing to come to worship at Kidia, but the school should be at Nsata. The church people of Kidia would not agree to this. So this matter must come back to the Association for settlement. It may be well if they would build a church of "Peace" in between the two villages.

Nov. 4:- We arrived at Kifwa to talk and arrange that their church should give up the villages that are on the south side of the Nguvu river, so that we can try to build up a good work on that south side. The people of Kifwa agreed perfectly.

Nov. 6:- We arrived at Nsongi, one of the villages on the south side of the Nguvu river. They received us joyfully. We explained to them how the Association wished that they should become united in fellowship with the church people of Kikola, also on the south side but nearly dead and in need of help. The church people of Nsongi agreed to this but asked about the two brick buildings (church and teacher's house) which they had. We said they should remain a part of the combined work, and they thanked us.

Nov. 7:- We arrived at Kikola. We were ashamed and sad because the church building had fallen down and things

showed no care or attention. In the evening we had a service, but even when we were finished there were no more than 10 people in attendance. We talked with them and explained the decision of the Association that the people of all the villages on the south side of the Nguvu river should be together in one church. They thanked us but wanted to know where the church center would be, at Kikola or at some other place. We replied that the Association would decide later where the center for their fellowship would be, and so we did not settle this question.

Nov. 8 — 13: — At Kimpongo we gathered for our monthly service. Sixty-five partook of Communion and the gifts amounted to 210 francs. The church voted to give 20 francs to the pastor. Then we heard a message by Jean Batoba, the inspector of schools from Sona Bata.

Dec. 3: — We had Communion service at Kimpongo, of which 60 persons partook, although a great many more came to the service. Ten people were returned to fellowship and one baby was dedicated. Gifts totaled 263.65 francs. We set apart 5 church members for special church work: 3 men to repair the church building, and two women to sweep it out every week.

Dec. 4:- We went to Kimfila because of two marriage palavers of Christian people. Both families were ready to break up their homes, but we were very happy when the two husbands and the two wives reached full agreement and happiness. We returned to Kimpongo in the evening. I am very sad because of my eye. It waters and waters and I can not see much with the other one.

Dec. 25:- Christmas at Kimpongo we had a very happy time. A great crowd gathered for our service and the special offering for the poor totaled 163.45 francs.

Dec. 27:- Today we started for Sona Bata because I am not well. I am going to the hospital again to get help because my eye gives me great pain.

NEW AFRICA

Six months in Africa and the Belgian Congo have but added to the joy and the thrill of being here. Sometimes while I was still in America it seemed as if it would be easier to give up and stay there. It is so hard to wait

and that is about all that was required of us for some weeks. At times it seemed as if there were no Africa after all, and that we were just having a bad dream, for we seemed to be getting no nearer to the time when we would sail. When finally we did start, it was with the knowledge impressed upon us by everyone that it would be weeks and even months before we arrived — in 1945!

In 1945! God had a different plan for us. It almost seemed as if he had tried us and the time of testing was past. We did not wait for 1945 to catch up with us. We left Philadelphia on November 26, 1944, and on December 25, 1944 we landed at Banana in the Belgian Congo.

Africa was real after all. We could reach out and touch it. We could breathe its air. We could put our arms around it and feel it. All on one day we received again God's eternal Christmas present, his Son, and we received Africa and her people. That is a Christmas never to be forgotten.

I was especially privileged to be able to take my language study at Banza Manteke. Of course, the ideal situation would have been for me to learn both the language and the work at Leopoldville. But, since everyone agreed that it would be difficult to learn the language there, I went to Banza Manteke. There, with the help of Esther Ehnbom, Mary Bonar and the natives I was introduced to the many responsibilities and privileges of one who works in Africa.

Two parts of the Banza Manteke work will always be especially dear and close to me.

The first part is the School. Learning a language is at best a difficult and monotonous business, but for whole weeks at a time I forgot that, for I concentrated, not on the language, but on the people. By watching the faces of the school boys and girls, by trying to keep track of their questions and by attending their pageant rehearsals the language of Kikongo began very slowly to penetrate into my thick skull. *That* is the way to learn Kikongo. The four new missionaries who went down to Banza Manteke right after Conference to finish their language study have my sympathy. They had to learn without the School. They had no pageant to teach them, no beards (which needed adjusting) to aid them on their way, no costumes to try on, no girls

to whom they could teach songs, but, most of all, they had no routine of classes. They weren't permitted to learn electricity with the older school boys, nor would they suffer with those who worry about exams, and then run home to read the boys' papers to see if they should have worried. I have no doubt at all but what they learned the language very acceptably. After all they had Mary Bonar and Remy Malutama to help them, but the fun they missed!

The second part of my stay at Banza Manteke which delighted me was the several visits I was able to make out into the district with both Esther and Mary. If all I knew about the people here in Leopoldville were their homes my field of experience would be barren indeed, and I would not be able to understand the people at all.

Barring one or two humiliating experiences, my brief introduction to itinerating was a joy. Of course I will never quite forgive the Congo River for producing a storm which wiped out all the results of my attempt to say good-bye to the sixth year class in a graceful manner. Who would have thought, that last night when graduation was over and we had finished the pageant we had been working on, that a few days later some of them would be pushing and pulling me down a slippery board from a river boat to a shore which we could see only when the lightning flashed? But perhaps it is just as well if I forget those things (and hope the boys will, too!) in favor of the remembrance of little boys singing at night, the only visible thing being their eager faces and their wide open mouths. Certainly I will always remember little boys standing on first one foot and then the other reading and saying their Bible, and all the while shaking and trembling with fear. I never could understand why they couldn't *see* how much I wanted them to do well, instead of me as stern and grim.

Then, just when I wanted to go on walking indefinitely, the work of examining the schools was finished, and we had to stop.

Banza Manteke will always mean something special to me, for it introduced me to missionaries and to their work, and, most of all, it introduced me to the native peoples of Afriea. I saw there the great hope which is with us in all of our work, the great possibilities which

are within these people. I know now that nothing is impossible with them. They are held down by no chains of an inferior race. If I am not careful, and perhaps even if I am careful, they will out strip me in knowledge and in Christian living

If I were an explorer or a world traveler, the land of Africa would thrill me most of all. It is so beautiful. I want to reach out and pat the velvet green of its rolling hills. My love of beauty is moved by the wealth of color and design which I see all about me. The palm trees take my breath away, and then, in a flash, all of that is gone when I see a person. For I am not an explorer or a world traveler. I simply love people and want to bring to them the best that I know in this world and in this life. Put in one word, that best is Jesus, the Son of God. Put in many words it is all the things which will enable the native peoples of this country to grow and develop so that they may claim their birthright as the Sons of God.

When I see any of the native people, even a baby I can feel their strong urge to know something, to know everything. Sometimes I am almost afraid. It is so hard to give them everything. I, for one know so little, and yet, they *will* learn. They *should* learn. They *have* to learn if they are to increase, as Jesus did, in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man. If *we* do not teach them, they will go to others who *will* teach them and satisfy that desire for knowledge, and the others will, in all probability, give it to them without emphasis upon the Source of all knowledge and the responsibilities knowledge brings.

Right now, Africa, my six months old Christmas present, resembles a high explosive more than anything else. There are several ways of dealing with it. It would be foolish of me to try to put the fire out; and it would be cowardly to run; and how wasteful it would be just to sit down and wait for it to go off. With all my heart I choose the way of helping and directing its energy.

I pray God that my life among these people may be a help to them and not a burden, that they may know me as a friend and as a brother and not as one who judges and criticizes, and that I may be permitted to walk

they seek so joyfully and enthusiastically and which leads to God's Kingdom here on earth.

PHYLLIS BENNER

OUT OF THE JUMPS DIARY

Saturday, January 6, 1945—Aboard the Joao Belo - it doesn't seem possible. Of course we are still in dock at Philadelphia, but at least we are on the ship.

Sunday, Jan. 7—"Though sometimes He leads through waters deep,
Troubles fall across my way,
Though sometimes the path seems rough and steep,
See His footprints all the way."

This hymn expresses so well our feelings as we met with the other missionaries on board for our evening service. We can't help but feel a little 'scared' to know we are actually on our way - even though we are still in Delaware Bay, but deep in our hearts we know we are secure.

Monday, Jan. 8—"Mal de Mer" and Mumps. Need more be said!

Sunday, Jan. 21—It certainly was good to see land today as we sailed into the Azores. We spent an interesting day watching the people on shore, the soldiers boarding the ship, and the vendors selling their souvenirs. We had a lovely service this evening. The fellowship with other missionaries means so much.

Wednesday, Jan. 24--- At last we are at the end of the first half of our trip in the bay at Lisbon. It was such a thrill to come on deck after supper and see the lights on the shore.

Thursday, Jan. 25--- My! what a day! First of all — sunrise and the beautiful bay of Lisbon, and then all the excitement of getting off the boat, going through customs' 'taxiing' madly through Lisbon's streets, getting our hotel rooms, and all the rest. Imagine us in Europe!

Friday, Feb. 9--- Once more aboard the Joao Belo after an interesting two weeks in Lisbon, and this time we are actually sailing for Africa.

Tuesday, Feb, 13--- Squid for lunch.

Tuesday, Feb. 20--- Spent today anchored off St. Vincent. Met

the pastor of the Baptist Church on the island. Meeting fellow Christians makes us realize the world wideness of our church.

Wednesday, Feb. 28--- Crossed the equator today – now we are really on the other side of the world.

Sunday, March 4—Today we put our feet on African soil for the first time—at Pointe Noire. We sighted land just as the sun was rising. Enjoyed our worship with the missionaries at the Swedish Mission.

Thursdy, March 8,—Halfway up the Congo to Matadi and we anchor for the night. Today has been full of new things to see—the greens of the land, all shades imaginable, the native dugouts and huts, the streams and islands, and the chocolate river underneath. All this plus the thrill of being here makes this a day to be remembered.

Friday, March 9,—Matadi! We are enjoying ourselves here at the S.M.F. station but we are so anxious to get to Banza Manteke. The hardest part of today was saying goodbye to our fellow travelers.

Saturday March 10,--- How can we ever tell all that we felt today? We are at Banza Manteke at last. So much has happened since this morning. The ride on the train was interesting, but it got longer with every mile. Then—Lufu---trying to make ourselves understood with our meager French, Tata Dibu just bursting to tell us he was from the station and us not able to understand a word, the wait for the truck, and then meeting Mary, Esther and Phyllis, and then finally Banza Manteke. Words are so inadequate, but this is another day we' ll always remember.

Sunday, March 11,--- Our first Sunday in Congo. We give our greetings at church and enjoy the boys' singing so much. How glad we will be when we can do more than smile and say 'Kiambote'.

Friday March 16,--- The boys got their football today and from the sounds thundering up from the field they surely are enjoying it.

Wednesday March 21,--- Baby clinic today and what fun! The babies certainly are cute. And many of the names-David, Lazalo, Elijah, Hannah, reflect the influence of the Bible. And you almost can tell which mothers are Christian and which are not just from the way they keep their children.

Sunday March 25,--- Our first 'speech' in Kikongo — at the leper colony. Of course Lubokolo, our teacher, had to do quite a bit of correcting and we had to read everything, but still it gives us a sense of achievement, and the folks seem so grateful for the little bit we can give. How anxious we are to be able to give more.

Sunday, April 1—Easter, and so meaningful. Even though we couldn't understand Tata Malutama this morning, his spirit was an inspiration in itself, and he conducted the Communion service in such a lovely way. It is wonderful to share the fellowship of the Lord's Table with these people. It was a thrill to hear the boys singing "Fuluka (He arose), Fuluka, Alleluyah, Fuluka," and to realize that all over the world people were singing the same message. The pageant this evening was exceptionally good. These folks are excellent actors, and had a challenging climax to their play. It certainly touched the heart of each of us.

Wednesday, April 4, - - - Supper on top of the water tower with the teachers and their wives, but we were rained out.

April 13-30- - -We have spent an enjoyable two weeks visiting some of our other stations and getting acquainted with some of the other missionaries. It was a thrill to see all our future pastors and teachers as they attended classes at Kimpese. The 'big city' of Leo, was a real surprise to us our visions of Africa included mostly jungles and wild animals-not a modern city. The Medical work at Sona Bata is very interesting, and is certainly an important part of our whole work.

Wednesdsy, May 2,---Visiting Palabala today. The trip up the hill was exciting and the view from the top just wonderful. At the service tonight, the boys sang" Power in the Blood", and we couldn't help but think how much that power has done here in Congo, and how much more it could do if there were enough missionaries and money to fully release it.

Friday, May 11----Graduation Day- our first in Congo. It was a thrill to watch the boys and girls marching into the church singing "En avant, en avant." It is heartwarming to know that we are a small part of such a great work.

May 15, 16--- Goodness what a time we've had ---a ride up the Congo in a river boat, getting caught in a regular Congo

downpour, landing in the dark with the aid of an occasional flash of lightning, walking through mud and rain to lamba, sleeping on the porch of a native house. Then the long walk to Lukunga, blisters and chiggers, our first swinging bridge, but seeing the regional school there and hearing the boys sing more than made up for the trip, and besides we want to get used to itinerating.

June 1-10--- Conference. These days have proved inspiring and pleasant. We have especially enjoyed meeting the other missionaries. We are proud to belong to such a group. The discussions have proved to be thought provoking, and have helped to give us an idea of the problems and possibilities of work here in the Congo. The worship services were helpful and inspiring. Now we look forward to Vanga, a new field, a new work, new people, new experiences and opportunities, and our prayer is that we may measure up to the standard set for us, and that we may not fail Christ is His work.

THE JUMPS

CONFERENCE

All conferences are unusual, but this year's was especially unusual, because of the presence of five new missionaries and the steps taken in consultation with the Native Council toward the organization of a Convention of all of the churches in our Congo mission.

Twenty percent is twenty percent, whether the whole is large or small, so with even as many as 19 of the "only 21" OLD missionaries on the field present our five new colleagues filled a big place and made us take heart. We believe they are an earnest of many more to come.

Vanga, whose entire staff, except for Dr. Osterholm, must leave for overdue furloughs, got Chester and Margaret Jump and the Wiseman twins, Doris and Dorothy, for church work, boys' school, girls' school and hospital respectively. Big tasks for new folks!

Phyllis Benner, our first ordained woman, is meeting the challenge of work in the urban center of Leopoldville. Women and girls there meet all the temptations and sins of any city, plus many unknown to non-African communities. All of these our new co-workers need your prayers as they

assume responsibilities weighty enough for the most experienced missionary.

Native delegates met together with some of the missionaries during the greater part of the week preceeding Conference to formulate plans for what is comparable to association meetings. Their report was brought to the joint meeting of missionaries and native leaders and was adopted. Since Conference we have heard leaders in the Banza Manteke field appealing enthusiastically for donations, to the "fellowship money box" from which expenses of delegates to the Convention will be paid. One of them said, "We used to complain because always the missionaries gathered alone and we didn't know too much of what they talked about, but now the door has been opende for us to join them."

Even this year there was discussed, in joint sessions, the evangelistic work of our fields, pastoral work, work among women and young people, Sundays Schools and the various phases of educational work — village, regional and central.

Not all of the time was spent in considering the many items on the agenda. Fellowship in morning and evening devotions and at meals means much, especially to those who come from isolated stations. Twice the whole Conference were guests of our missionaries at Leopoldville-Ouest. Supper the first Sunday night was followed by evening worship together and the singing of spirituals. The following Saturday evening, after eating out of doors around a campfire, a program of stunts, readings and singing was enjoyed by all.

Mr. Jump's sermon Sunday evening was a challenge to all to go forward in faith, even in the face of discouragement and difficulties. Our God is able. We felt His presence in the Communion service which followed and knew that as we separated one from the other He would go with each one of us and abide with us during the days of the year ahead.

MARGARET HALL

"WHERE HE LEADS ME"

In the chapel of the school and Christian Center at Leopoldville West the morning service was being conducted in two languages. A congregational hymn had been sung in

and then a class of small girls was called up to the front. Their teacher more or less lined them up, waved his arms, and they started singing. It was the Kikongo version of "Where He leads me, I will follow".

Hidden somewhere among the larger of the girls was a youngster who sang two verses as a solo part. Her voice was clear and it was heart warming to hear this testimonial song from one so young. The whole congregation was absolutely quiet and that is a rare occasion out here. As the class joined in on the refrain, one could easily see that every one was singing with them in their hearts.

My mind went back to one of the annual conferences held at Sona Bata during my first term in Congo. There were giants in the mission those days, and annual conferences sometimes brought forth fireworks. The question that came to my mind now was a discussion on whether the work of the Kingdom might be better set forward if the A.B.F.M.S. were to turn such work as we had at Matadi over to the Swedish Mission, and move our small staff to Leopoldville West, which had been without a resident missionary for several years. The Congo river from Matadi on is full of whirlpools and it suggested a natural example to one of the old warriors of the mission. He wanted to know if we could seriously suggest leaving the unsaved and untaught people of Matadi to the whirlpool of sin that existed in the native villages around that great port city. Another orator rose and said that for too long we had been neglecting the people of Leopoldville who were being swept down to destruction over the roaring rapids of iniquity as represented by the village life of Leo. West. To all who have seen and heard the mighty rapids in the Congo as it crowds its way out from Stanley Pool through the narrow channel the picture was a vivid one.

At that time I was still following the good advice given me by an old and experienced missionary on the steamer going to Congo. This was that during my first term I could not possibly know enough to take part intelligently in discussions of mission work, and it would be seemly for me to be a hearer only for that period. But the Mission decided to leave the whirlpools to the Swedes and to have a go at the rapids. We did accomplish something during

the next few years, and the present Christian Center is a daily witness to the fact that while the Congo river still goes its way uninterrupted by man, many souls have been rescued.

As a background to the song by the girls we had the steady and rhythmic beat of native drums as they beat the time for a drunken dance taking place only a short distance from the chapel. The ribald shouting and clapping of the spectators as they watched the dancing was a great contrast to the stillness inside the chapel. People passing in the street would stop to listen, some even coming up close enough to put their heads inside the door. Children playing outside would race up to the door and race away screaming at each other.

Unseen from inside the church, but definitely a part of the native life, the harlots roam the village streets. Clothed to outshine the lily, scented to overcome tropical body odors, shoes to incite ordinary women to envy, some even mounted on bicycles as a proof of their financial success, they reap a grim harvest. They do incite envy on the part of wives who lack the clothes, scent, shoes, and bicycles, as well as a similar lack of a moral standard of living. There are few women in Leopoldville compared to the number of men. The men are reasonably well paid and have money to gratify their desires.

As a mission, we have been unable to maintain more than a skeleton staff at Leopoldville. It is the administrative and financial center of the mission, and missionaries there have many responsibilities apart from carrying on the evangelistic and educational work. This past year our treasurer and his wife, Harry and Linda Watkins, have had to shoulder the whole load. Now we have given them some help in placing Miss Phyllis Benner there. But even with Miss Benner's help, the staff is much too small for the present work and can not possibly take advantage of the many opportunities for advancement. The Roman Catholics have a great installation already, and are enlarging it rapidly. The Salvation Army has a large camp but in a different location from our chapel. Our progress is slow and painful.

As the little girl sang her way into my heart, I tried to picture her growing up in the native city of Leopoldville. There is a very slim program of Christian education and almost

no social life under Christian ausipices. The temptations are many, and their appeals are made with all the wisdom of Satan. If her parents are Christians, she has about an even chance of escaping a life of sin. If she comes from a non-Christian home. life does not hold much promise for her outside such help as the Mission can give her. The roar of the mighty rapids can speak of the shouting, dancing, drumming, and drinking of a life of sin. But I remember some of our older missionaries who during conference always wanted to spend at least one night over at Leo. West so they could better hear the rapids. It spoke to them of the might and power of an infinite God, who created and still rules this world.

We ask you who read to pray with us of the Congo Baptist Mission, for the girls of Leopoldville. May they be table to hear God's voice calling them above the calls of this world and may they have the faith and courage to follow where He leads.

B. W. ARMSTRONG

KIMPESE

Kimpese had a great year 1944-45 and the coming year promises to be no less interesting, with a still larger student body (78 in 1943-44, 100 in 1944-45 and 120 in 1945-46), the organization of a new pastors' course for younger less-well prepared men and a more advanced class for women.

At present a refresher course for men is being held, as well as the Bible course for women, mentioned elsewhere.

Three times during the past year the members of the joint hymn book committee have met here.

Special visitors have included Miss Margaret Wrong, Secretary of the International Committee on Christian Literature for Africa; Dr. Jackson Davis, the Associate Director of the General Education Board of the Rockefeller Foundation; Mr. Thomas Campbell of Tuskegee, Field Agent of the Agricultural Extension Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture in some of the southern states, Mr. and Mrs. Coxill and Dr. Carpenter, several of our A.B.F.M.S. missionaries enroute to Bengal-Orissa and Assam, and just the past week, Bishop Booth of the M.E.C.M. (Methodist) and his secretary Mr. Roberts together with their Home

Secretaries Dr. Archer and Miss McKinnon.

In May six men were graduated from the Pastors' course and seven from the Normal school.

The Board of Management approved the faculty's recommendations regarding reorganization of courses; the eventual establishment of a Bible School, higher Theological training for pastors, teacher training for young women and correspondence courses; and the establishment of a church at E.P.I. Regular members of the church will be native staff members and workmen. Students will be associate members with more privileges than are usually accorded such.

In March we welcomed the Ericksons back from furlough. They then spent several months helping out at Leopoldville, until Conference. We are happy they are now settling in at E.P.I. Other members of the staff for the coming year are Principal and Mrs. Oscar Stenstrom and Mr. and Mrs. Avrid Stenstrom of the S.M.F., and Mr. and Mrs. Maurice of the B.M.S.

MARGARET HALL

* * *

I promised someone I would pray for her—
How could I forget about it?
Yes, surely, God, in His infinite love,
Would carry her through without it;
But I failed my friend and it grieves me sore,
I failed may dear Lord, and I love Him more!
He never forgets to pray for His own,
He "makes intercession" before the throne;
And He calls us often apart to share
With Him in this great ministry of prayer.

—Author unknown to us.

CONGO MISSION DIRECTORY

Listed in order of arrival on field or at station — present term

BANZA MANTEKE

Miss Mary Bonar
Miss Esther Ehnbom
Rev. E. R. Abbott

MOANZA

Rev. and Mrs. L. A. Brown
Miss Alice Jorgenson
Miss Eva Shepard

TONDO

Miss Marguerite Eldredge
Dr. and Mrs. A. J. B. Russell (B.M.S.)
Miss P. Russell (B.M.S.)

LEOPOLDVILLE

Mr. and Mrs. H. J. Watkins
Rev. Phyllis Benner

KIKONGO

Rev. and Mrs. B. W. Armstrong

VANGA

Miss Dorothy Wiseman
Dr. A. C. Osterholm
Miss Doris Wiseman
Rev. and Mrs. C. Jump

KIMPESE

Rev. and Mrs. E. G. Hall
Rev. and Mrs. H. Erickson

SONA BATA

Rev. and Mrs. R. Metzger
Miss Muriel Jennings (B.M.S.)

ON FURLOUGH OR EN ROUTE

Rev. and Mrs. E. Atkins
Miss Mildred Tice
Mrs. A. C. Osterholm
Rev. and Mrs .C. E. Smith
Dr. and Mrs. G. W. Tuttle
Miss Lena Youngsman
Miss Vendla Anderson
Rev. and Mrs. H. D. Brown
Dr. and Mrs. H. M. Freas
Rev. and Mrs. M. S. Engwall
Miss Ruth Dickey
Miss Agnes Anderson
Miss Emily Satterberg
Miss Grace Cooper
Rev. and Mrs. W. F. Robbins